

CWD UPDATE 77

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Presently, there is no evidence of prion diseases in free-living German cervids. This is the result of a study conducted by scientists of the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research in Berlin, Germany. The scientists examined more than 7,300 brain samples taken from cervids (roe deer, red deer and fallow deer) in nearly all districts of Germany. All of them tested negative for TSE. Now, after six cases of scrapie in British mouflon sheep, scientists will start a new study to test German mouflon for prion diseases. The aim of this study is to test mouflon all over Germany; with special attention being paid to 20 high-risk areas. A high-risk area is defined by a large number of free-living mouflon or by the occurrence of scrapie in local sheep.

Canada has confirmed a sixth and seventh case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). The sixth case was found in a mature crossbred cow from Manitoba, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) said. The agency had announced the discovery of a potential case on Jun 30. In an investigation, CFIA officials determined that the owner purchased the cow in 1992 "as part of an assembled group of cattle," the agency said. This means that the animal was at least 15 years old and was born well before the 1997 start of Canada's ban on feeding rendered cattle protein to cattle and other ruminant animals. Investigators are attempting to locate the animal's birth farm, which will help identify herd mates and the feed it was exposed to at an early age. The seventh case was in a 50-month-old dairy cow from Alberta. The CFIA has located the birth farm, and investigators are tracing other cattle born on the premises within 12 months before or after the birth of the affected animal. Both cases of the disease were detected through Canada's ongoing surveillance program, and no part of the either animal's carcass entered the human food or animal feed systems.

A CWD positive wild white-tailed deer was removed recently at Devil's Lake State Park in Sauk County, Wisconsin according to the Department of Natural Resources. The two to three year-old doe was shot by park staff on April 24 on the north side of Devil's Lake. The animal was targeted because of its emaciated condition, head hanging, and low and easy approachability, all visible indicators of the disease's late stages. Devil's Lake State Park is located in the CWD Herd Reduction Zone. This animal is the seventh CWD positive found in Sauk County.

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish report the finding of three additional cases of CWD in deer. Two of the deer were located on White Sands Missile Range, where the disease was first detected in New Mexico. The third deer was from the small mountain community of Timberon in the Sacramento Mountains, east of the White Sands site. This brings the total number of positives in New Mexico to 15 deer and two elk.